



**Withdraw the Proposed Meat Marketing Claims:
Comments of the Organic Trade Association on Docket Number LS-02-02**

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Submitted by
Tom Hutcheson
Associate Policy Director*

The Organic Trade Association (OTA) is the only North American business association for all organic business, from farmers to retailers, and represents 1200 members.

OTA strongly supports the comments of the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, submitted by Ferd Hoefner. OTA urges USDA to consider those excellent and detailed comments very carefully and to withdraw the proposed meat marketing claim standards.

The organic industry has grown 20% per year over the past 12 years. This is due to the ability of the industry to deliver what our consumers want. The current system of stringent standards and USDA accreditation of certifying agents represents the best national organic program in the world.

The proposed standards for meat marketing claims are weak and ill-defined. This could easily result in a loss of credibility for USDA and the need to defend against a consumer backlash. USDA should withdraw the proposed meat marketing claim standards and enter into a public process that will enhance, rather than degrade, USDA's credibility.

